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ABSTRACT

This brief has the following contents: statistics on the number of women in nontraditional occupations, summary of legislation about women and employment, barriers inhibiting the entry of women into nontraditional training and employment, and strategies to overcome barriers to women entering nontraditional work settings. The statistics section notes that only about 7 percent of all working women were employed in nontraditional occupations in 1992 and that between 1988 and 1992 the number of women in nontraditional jobs remained relatively unchanged at 3 percent of the total number of employed workers. It also says that women working in nontraditional jobs typically earn 20-30 percent more than women in traditional occupations, but that women earn less than men in the same occupations. The section on public policy summarizes the major provisions of the following acts: Job Training Partnership Act, the Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act, the Women in Apprenticeship Occupations and Nontraditional Occupations Act, the National Affordable Housing Reauthorization Act of 1992, and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, along with various civil rights acts. The barriers to nontraditional work are listed in the context of social/cultural, education and training, on-the-job, and sexual harassment issues. Finally, strategies to overcome these barriers are suggested in the form of institutional change and individual support. Six print resources from Wider Opportunities for Women and three organizational resources are listed. (KC)

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Women and Nontraditional Work

Wider Opportunities for Women, Inc.
1325 G Street, NW, Lower Level
Washington, DC 20005-3104

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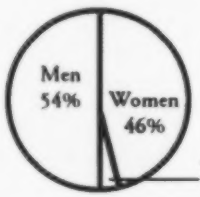
Women and Nontraditional Work

U.S. Department of Labor defines nontraditional occupations as jobs in which women make up less than 25% of the total number of workers in that occupation.

In 1992, 53.8 million women were employed; 3.5 million women (6.6% of all working women) were employed in nontraditional occupations.

Occupational Categories	# of women in nontraditional jobs	Examples
Managerial, Professional	638,000	lawyer, engineer
Technical, Sales, Administrative Support	539,000	pilot, electronic technician
Service	295,000	police, barber
Production, Craft, Repair	622,000	auto mechanic, carpenter
Operators, Fabricators, Laborers	1,003,000	welder, truck and taxi driver
Farming, Forestry, Fishing	444,000	farmer, fisher, groundskeeper
	3,541,000	

Between 1988 and 1992, the number of women in nontraditional jobs remained relatively unchanged at 3% of the total number of employed workers.



Total Men and Women Employed

Women in nontraditional jobs = 3% of employed women and men

Differences in race/ethnicity, age and marital status are minimal between women working in traditional jobs and women in nontraditional jobs.

Characteristics	% of All Women Working in: Traditional	Nontraditional
White	84%	86%
Black or Hispanic	16%	14%
Under 35	44%	43%
35 or over	56%	57%
Single	37%	41%
Married	63%	59%

Women working in nontraditional jobs typically earn 20%–30% more than women in traditional occupations.

Traditionally Female Jobs	Women's Median Weekly Pay		Traditionally Male Jobs
Secretary	$373	$523	Mechanic/Repairer
Child Care Worker	$153	$318	Motor Vehicle Operator
Textile Sewing Machine Operator	$216	$445	Police Officer
Data Entry Clerk	$344	$587	Mail Carrier

When women work in the same occupations as men they still do not earn equal pay.

Occupation	Wages: Women	Men	Wage Gap
Truck Driver	$299	$421	29%
Freight, Stock and Material Handler	$278	$314	12%
Police/Detective	$445	$552	19%
Printing Machine Operator	$308	$464	33%

Over the past 5 years, the greatest increase of women working in nontraditional jobs has been in the professional occupations.

Occupation	Percent Female: 1988	1992
Lawyer	19.3%	21.4%
Engineer	7.3%	8.5%
Surveyor/Mapmaker	4.3%	6.7%
Physicist/Astronomer	7.1%	11.1%

Even though most working women (73%) are in nonprofessional occupations, gains in those nontraditional jobs have been minimal or nonexistent over the past 5 years.

Occupation	Percent Female: 1988	1992
Electrician	1.4%	1.2%
Telephone Installer	12.1%	10.5%
Truck Driver	4.3%	4.6%
Automobile Mechanic	.7%	.8%

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Women and Nontraditional Work

Public Policy

JOB TRAINING PARTNERSHIP ACT (JTPA)

- Provides federal resources for employment and training.
- Authorizes funding for basic skills and job training in nontraditional areas.
- Aims to reduce welfare dependency and increase employment earnings.
- Targets services to special populations including women, minorities, handicapped persons and welfare recipients.

HOWEVER:

- JTPA Title IIA serves only 3 to 10% of its eligible population.
- In over half the SDAs studied by the GAO in 1991, an average of 9% of women and 29% of men receiving classroom training were trained for occupations paying $7.00/hour or more.
- In 1989, a GAO report indicated that only 9% of female JTPA participants were trained for nontraditional jobs.

CARL PERKINS ACT

- Provides federal resources for vocational education.
- Focuses on sex equity in vocational education and encourages nontraditional enrollments.
- Targets single parents and homemakers through sex equity programs.

THE NONTRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN (NEW) ACT (P.L. 102–235)

- Amends JTPA to require states and SDAs to set goals for increasing the number of women trained and placed in nontraditional jobs, and to evaluate their progress in meeting those goals.
- Authorizes $6 million in demonstration grant monies.

THE WOMEN IN APPRENTICESHIP OCCUPATIONS AND NONTRADITIONAL OCCUPATIONS ACT (P.L. 102-530)

- Authorizes $1 million to the U.S. Department of Labor to provide technical assistance to employers and unions on preparing the workplace to successfully integrate women into nontraditional jobs.

THE NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1992 (P.L. 102–550)

- Includes *Women in Homebuilding Provision* that enables local housing authorities to train women for homebuilding jobs through construction or rehabilitation of housing in their communities.

THE INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT OF 1991 (ISTEA) (P.L. 102–240)

- Allows states to spend 1/4 of 1% of their surface transportation and bridge monies on training and supportive services for women and minorities.
- This option will increase to 1/2 of 1% on October 1, 1993.

Employment Discrimination Law

TITLE VII OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964

- Prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion or national origin.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY COMMISSION GUIDELINES OF 1980

- Interprets Title VII as prohibiting sexual harassment and defines sexual harassment.

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATIONAL ACT AMENDMENT OF 1972

- Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex by educational institutions receiving federal funds.

EQUAL PAY ACT OF 1973

- Requires an employer to pay equal wages to men and women working in the same establishment at jobs requiring the same skill, responsibility and work conditions.
- Exempts pay differences based on seniority, merit system, production or a factor other than sex.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11246

- Prohibits discrimination by federal contractors and requires affirmative action for women and minorities.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1991

- Allows women, people with disabilities, and religious minorities to collect monetary damages in cases of intentional employment discrimination with a limit of $50,000 for those victims who work for an employer of 15 to 100 employees.

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Women and Nontraditional Work

Barriers

Barriers inhibiting entry of women into nontraditional training and employment are complex and interrelated.

SOCIAL/CULTURAL

- Socialization to traditional female roles
- Unsupportive family and friends
- Negative attitudes of classmates and co–workers
- Lack of self–confidence and assertiveness
- Lack of female role models
- Limited experience with tools and mechanical operations

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

- Limited information provided about nontraditional options
- Females directed toward traditional classes
- Lack of support for sex equity efforts by instructors and other personnel
- Lack of prerequisite classes such as math and science
- Limited access to on–the–job training and apprenticeships
- Lack of support services–child care, transportation, etc.
- Isolation and sexual harassment in classrooms

ON–THE–JOB

- Discrimination in hiring, firing, promotion or lay–offs on basis of sex, race, age, physical build/ability
- Isolation and sexual harassment on the worksite
- Lack of support from some unions
- Lack of support services

CITES FOR THIS FACT SHEET ARE FROM:

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics
U.S. General Accounting Office

Researched by Lori Dudek and Kristin Watkins
Nontraditional Employment Training Project, May 1993

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Women in nontraditional jobs or training are at greater risk of sexual harassment.

- Unwelcome behaviors can include teasing, jokes, remarks and questions; deliberate touching; letters, telephone calls or material of a sexual nature; pressure for sexual favors; sexual assault.

Sexual harassment is against the law.

- Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act has been interpreted through the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines of 1980 as prohibiting sexual harassment.

Employers can be held liable for sexual harassment.

- 1986 Supreme Court case established right to seek legal remedy under Title VII (Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson).
- 1991 Supreme Court ruling stated that the display of sexually explicit materials in the workplace can constitute sexual harassment (Robinson v. Jacksonville Shipyards).

Women can take specific steps when faced with sexual harassment.

- Tell the harasser to stop the offensive behavior.
- Document all incidents of harassment.
- Notify your supervisor, union representative or other appropriate person of harassment.
- Know your company or school policy on sexual harassment and follow its procedures.
- Consider filing a formal grievance or complaint if the above steps do not remedy the situation.
- Stay on the job.
- Find support from family, friends or other groups to help you through the situation.

Women and Nontraditional Work

Strategies

Strategies to overcome barriers must focus on changing institutions and providing individual support to women.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

- Assure effective implementation of the NEW Act and training for women under ISTEA and the National Affordable Housing Reauthorization Act.
- Monitor local and state expenditures for job training and vocational education to see that adequate support exists for training women and girls in nontraditional careers.
- Train teachers, counselors, and program administrators to support access of women and girls to high–wage training and employment.
- Build the program elements necessary to increase the number of women recruited, trained and placed in nontraditional jobs into all public training programs.
- Provide incentives for training programs that meet or exceed their goals for training and placing women and girls in nontraditional jobs.
- Promote collaboration among JTPA, vocational education, apprenticeship and training, unions, sex equity, and JOBS programs, and between employers and enforcement personnel.

INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT

- Provide career exploration activities that include career information, role models, and a discussion of the difficulties of being a woman in a nontraditional job.
- Include pre-vocational training, such as tool indentification and physical conditioning, in program curriculum.
- Train women and girls in the "survival skills" necessary to work in male-dominated jobs, including how to handle sexual harrassment.
- Organize support groups for women and girls in nontraditional jobs or training.
- Work with employers and unions to prepare the workplace to successfully receive women and girls in nontraditional jobs.

RESOURCES

Resources from Wider Opportunities for Women

- ***Women's Work Force Network*** – $55 annual membership
- ***Training, Placing and Retaining Women in Nontraditional Jobs Manual*** – $70
- ***Sexual Harassment Solutions at Work*** – $20
- ***Nontraditional Occupations for Women Bibliography*** – $10
- ***Sexual Harassment Bibliography*** – $10
- For a complete listing of publications, videos, and technical assistance services available through WOW call (202) 638–3143.

Other Resources

- ***Sex Equity Coordinators:*** Contact your state Department of Education or Public Instruction
- ***The Women's Bureau,*** U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room S3002, Washington, DC 20210; (202) 219–6611
- ***National Tradeswomen's Network,*** 3001 Dickinson Street, Philadelphia, PA 19146; (215) 551–3319
- ***Coalition of Labor Union Women,*** 15 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003; (212) 242–0700

About WOW: Wider Opportunities for Women (WOW) has worked locally and nationally for 30 years to achieve economic independence and equality of opportunity for women and girls. WOW leads a national network of more than 500 independent women's employment programs and advocates across the country. WOW encourages broad distribution of this fact sheet. Those interested in reproducing it are simply required to inform our office. Research for this fact sheet was funded by the Ford Foundation.

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